

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 DPW-01 AID-20 EUR-25 NEA-11 DRC-01 /164 W

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P 251732Z JAN 74

FM USDEL JEC PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 174

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JEC PARIS 2256

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: GVN-PRG BILATERALS: 38TH PLENARY SESSION, JANUARY 25,
1974

1. SUMMARY. GVNDL CONTINUED TO PRESS FOR AGREEMENT ON HOLDING GENERAL ELECTIONS JULY 20. IT PROPOSED ADOPTION OF A WORKING CALENDAR, OR SET OF DEADLINES, SO THAT A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT ON SVN INTERNAL PROBLEMS COULD BE SIGNED MARCH 19. (THIS WAS REMINISCENT OF TACTICS FOLLOWED LAST YEAR IN FURTHERANCE OF PREVIOUS RESPECTIVE ELECTION PROPOSALS.) THE GVN ALSO INTRODUCED THE SUBJECT OF THE PARACEL ISLANDS DISPUTE, APPEALING TO PRG NATIONALIST SENTIMENT AND REQUESTING ISSUANCE OF A JOINT DECLARATION CONDEMNING CHINESE "AGGRESSION". PRGDEL, SPEAKING FIRST, REJECTED THE GVN ELECTION PROPOSAL IN A PREPARED STATEMENT REMARKABLE NOT ONLY FOR ITS BREVITY BUT FOR THE RELATIVE MODERATION OF ITS LANGUAGE, AS WELL. SUBSTANTIVELY, THE PRG DID NOT GO BEYOND ITS USUAL THREE "URGENT DEMANDS", I.E. PRECONDITIONS. ON THE PARACELS ISSUE THE PRG RESPONDED NEGATIVELY, BUT WITH VISIBLE EMBARRASSMENT. IT WAS AGREED TO RECONVENE FEBRUARY 1. END SUMMARY.

2. PRG "AMBASSADOR" TH'S SHORT PREPARED STATEMENT BEGAN
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WITH A TET GREETING TO THE GVNDL. AFTER REVIEWING THE

SITUATION IN SVN ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT, THI REMARKED THAT, CONSIDERING THE WARTIME CONDITIONS WHICH STILL OBTAIN, THE GVN PROPOSAL FOR ELECTIONS ON JULY 20 WAS "DECEITFUL". HE REITERATED THE LONG-STANDING THREE PRG "URGENT DEMANDS" AS PRECONDITIONS TO RESOLUTION OF SVN INTERNAL PROBLEMS. (COMMENT: THI'S ADDRESS WAS REMARKABLY MODERATE AND NON-POLEMICAL WHEN TAKEN IN COMPARISON WITH HIS MOST RECENT PRESENTATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE MADE BUT PASSING REFERENCE TO THE US AND CAST NO ASPERSIONS UPON PRESIDENT THIEU, OMITTED THE USUAL ATROCITY CHARGES, ETC.).

3. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER VIEN (GVN) RENEWED ATTEMPTS TO PERSUADE THE PRG TO AGREE IN PRINCIPLE ON THE HOLDING OF GENERAL ELECTIONS JULY 20. HE PROPOSED THAT THE TWO SIDES WORK UNINTERRUPTEDLY SO AS TO SIGN A BRIEF "DRAFT PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT" ON JANUARY 27. THIS DRAFT WOULD SET FORTH THE INTENTION OF THE DELEGATIONS TO FOLLOW A WORKING CALENDAR ENABLING THEM TO SIGN A "COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNAL PROBLEMS OF SVN" ON MARCH 19. DR. VIEN SUBMITTED A DRAFT TEXT FOR THE PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT AND INDICATED COMPLETE GVN READINESS TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE FORMULATIONS.

4. VIEN THEN TURNED TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MAKING A NATIONALIST APPEAL TO THE PRG ABOUT THE PARACEL ISLANDS CONTROVERSY. URGING THE PRG TO SET ASIDE IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES "IN DEFENSE OF VIETNAMESE TERRITORY", VIEN SUBMITTED A DRAFT JOINT RESOLUTION CONDEMNING PEKING'S "AGRESSION" AND CALLING FOR ACTION BY PARIS CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN THE DISPUTE. (COMMENT: IN A PARIS PRESS CONFERENCE JANUARY 24 GVN AMBASSADOR O FRANCE QUANG HAD PROPOSED THAT THE PARACELS ISSUE BE ADJUDICATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE, BUT VIEN MADE NO MENTION OF THIS SUGGESTION.

5. IN SUBSEQUENT INFORMAL DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE DELEGATIONS THI REJECTED THE DRAFT RESOLUTION, CHALLENGED THE GVN'S RIGHT TO UPHOLD VIETNAMESE SOVEREIGN INTERESTS, AND ALLEGED THAT THE GVN HAD COMPLETELY MISREPRESENTED
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THE INCIDENT. (WE ARE INFORMED THAT THI'S DISCOMFITURE OVER THIS STANCE WAS UNMISTAKEABLY APPARENT).

6. IT WAS AGREED TO HOLD THE NEXT SESSION ON FEBRUARY 1. MOSSLER

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